**CURRICULUM COUNCIL**

October 9, 2012

Minutes

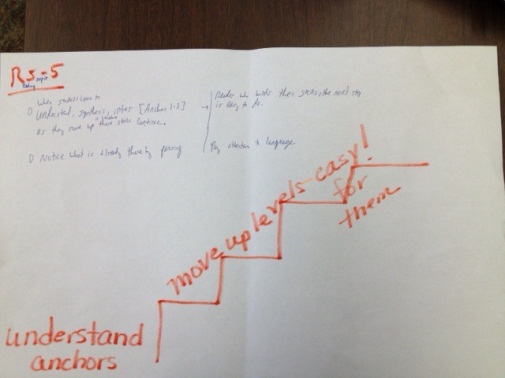
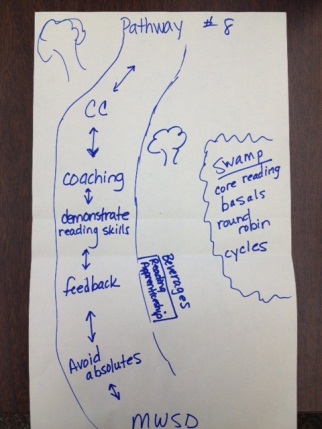


* Welcome – Committee Work
  + Communication | Contribution | Collaboration
  + Relationships | Feedback |Student Engagement
* Continuing Our Focus
  + Continued support of writer’s workshop K - 8
  + Continued support of SAS & curriculum development in the Toolbox

Daphne gave direction as to find the templates on SAS. They are a work in progress. Open to everyone.

* + Integration of literacy strategies across content areas – *More R.A. strategies, more writing…*
  + Keystone Exams – *Algebra I, Biology, Literature*
* Comments from yesterday…

Thor shared that Fine Arts looked at Keystone Exam Glossaries. Daphne shared the spreadsheet the FA group started. Beth shared that 2nd grade was very productive at getting the teacher points done for Writer’s Workshop. Reading Specialists completed a lot of work as well. Mindy shared that Science teachers worked on holes for the PSSA and the high school science common evaluations. Daphne asked if there was anything more that she could do to help get ready for professional development days. Many shared that the outline was a good checklist that helped bring up further discussions. Henrietta said it was nice to have department time. Daphne agreed that she after looking at everyone’s notes she felt that it was very productive day.

* *Pathways to the Common Core*  - Chapters 3 Discussion
* There was lots of discussion among the group. What stood out? Critical? Need to emphasize? **The amount of time students should be reading every day to MAINTAIN grade level is 90 minutes.** Books should be matched to the student’s ability so he/she can be successful. How do you implement independent reading? How do you check if students are reading on level? Dave H. heard on NPR about research being done that addresses how reading effects and strengthens many parts of the brain. (Researcher - Michigan State University professor [Natalie Phillips](http://www.english.msu.edu/people/faculty/natalie-m-phillips/).) **A key component is that students are matched to books so that during independent reading time students are actually reading text at their level.**
* Cynthia was glad to have the snapshot of a standard and how you can use it in your classroom, they want more. People felt the chapter was brief, to the point, clear and focused. David shared they were very thankful for Mandy’s presentation about CCSS. Dave H. suggested an in-house YouTube of video clips of teachers sharing ways to use standards in their classroom. A suggestion was made to have English teachers go into different departments during professional development days to help share integration strategies. Everyone was very happy that something that was shared during curriculum council was taken away and is now being used in classrooms. It may be something small, but it was something tangible and worth implementing now. Another suggestion was to have a “Take Away” for the day for other professional development day.
* Deanna shared what she is doing with Word Walls…vocabulary in Math has been great.
* Dustin uses index cards and students can add words to the word wall that has the word on one side and definition…students can grab a word off wall and use it.
* It was suggested that we continue implementing word walls in the elementary and middle schools. Once students get to high school they will know what a “Word Wall” is. Let’s work to utilize word walls more at the high school as well. They key is, not only to have a word wall, but regularly use and practice the words that are placed on the word wall.
* Other suggestions that were shared were: Words of the week that are shared on the announcements and used as an entire school-based activity; traveling word wall in writer’s workshop folder, students will have them wherever they go; using vocabulary index cards on rings that students can grab and study with a partner.
* Mandy started CCSS activities with the high school English apartment. They are reading “The Book Thief” and each week they are focused on a different standard from Common Core.
* *Pathways to the Common Core*  - Chapters 4 Activity
* Took time to look at some “snip-its” of Chapter 4 in groups and work on some activities.
* Colleagues read text together, focus on reading anchors: Standard 1 - focus on details before big idea (words & phrases); Standard 2 – look at the big idea; Standard 3 – how characters, events, ideas develop and interact.
* Reading for craft and structure all related to each other, focus on what, how, how relate – want readers to be able to investigate decisions authors make (point of view, keep attention, etc.); when implementing standard not able to address every standard at once – one or two at a time.
* After learning the first three anchors (Understand, Synthesis, Infer) you keep moving up the standard scale. They will keep using the previous standards and build upon; the next step is easier once they learn the first three anchors; we should be pausing and taking a moment to look at details and then pay attention to language.
* Read as much as you can; comparing & contrasting, understanding similar meaning, plot, character, etc. (analyzing); experiencing through the reading; analyzing reading one text to another text, standard 8=informational: standards 7 & 9 being able to gain ability to analyze craft and structure.
* Higher level comprehension, analyzing, engulf students in as much reading as possible in all genres, as long as students are reading ready to read more – reading muscles. Students need to read children & young adult books, insert read-alouds and book clubs into reading time. Get students to the standards: (1) need assessments – higher level comprehension (2) Align teaching methods & content (\*critical reading).
* Pathways – on and off path – On path: Common Core>coaching (vocab activities)> demonstrate reading skills>feedback>avoid absolutes>MWSD-In swamp: Core reading, BASALS, round robin, cycles (chart).
* Swamp – you can’t choose the reading for the kids, they have to choose – the more reading done the scores go higher (Peter Johnson study) John Guthrie articles.
* Tied everything together; students need to be active learners; need to give them the tools and let them find meaning and understanding themselves; if we let them, the kids will want to do it; teachers need support and staff development on effective methods for accelerating student’s skills; good reading/teacher methods will attract good teachers and make good teachers better.
* Assessments – Let’s review…
  + What do we need?
* Our Commitment to Literacy – What will we do more of next year? *–* Yes! These things are happening across many classrooms as evidenced by departmental notes. Keep up the great work!
  + A summary from the meetings you have had with your departments:
    - Word walls
    - Vocabulary study w/emphasis on Keystone exam glossaries
    - Incorporating more writing using specific vocabulary/word wall words
    - Instructional strategies to teach comprehension, analysis, and interpretation of literature
* Keystone Exams (or other) Vocabulary Activities – Brainstorm TO-DO - Bring a vocabulary activity to share with the group
* Next meeting: Tuesday, November 13, 2012 –
  + TO-DO -Read chapter five in *Pathways to the Common Core*